

Version 12.0
by Rev. Mr. [illegible]
12.C.m
4

PHIL. iii. 8.

— *That I may win Christ.*

THE Children of Men are generally prone and inclin'd to endeavour, and attempt the Winning or Gaining something or other they esteem considerable. Were I to shew you how you might win the Riches, Honours, Profits and Pleasures of the World, no doubt but you would readily embrace it, and follow all proper Directions to obtain that end; but I am now to shew you how to win Christ, which is infinitely better, and for this, to perswade you, to make your Adventure. Were we as ready for this, as other things, a little Argument would be sufficient to make us endeavour to come up to so bright an Example as is now set before us, in the Words of my Text.

Into the Account of some Mens Lives, may be brought many a noble Exploit; but what is there that does match, or can compare with the winning of Christ; that's of more worth than ten Thousand Worlds: This therefore is the grand and important Concern of human Life; the chief and sure Preparative for an approaching Death: This is the Mark, we should be all aiming at; the Prize we should be striving for; this should have the bent of our Minds, and become the business of our Lives; this should ingross, and take up the Thoughts of our Hearts, and even strain, and enlarge the Desires

The Christian's Prize.

fires of our Souls; this is that which should excite, and engage, in the most united Manner, all our Powers and Faculties, even that we might win Christ; this is as the hinge of our Hopes, and he is the Harbour and Haven of our Happiness: And as ever we would escape the dreadful Consequences, of dying in our Sins, under the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, the Wrath and Anger of Almighty God, and finally, the being sent to the infernal Lake, and becoming as Fuel for insufferable Flames, where there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth, and that for ever and ever: Now I say as you would escape all this, be sure to win Christ. On the other hand, as ever you would really, and in the most becoming manner, act your Part wisely to gain for your selves the greatest Riches, and raise your selves to the highest Honours, and at length be brought to everlasting Happiness, observe the way to all this is plain before you, for if you win Christ, you win all; but if you lose him, all is lost; for on this critical Point all turns, either for Heaven or Hell, Weal or Wo: On the winning or losing of Christ, depends our most awful and everlasting Concerns, and now an opportunity is put into your hands, for the winning this great Prize, and you may never have such another. For if your Hearts, hereto, be not wanting, what can hinder your winning of Christ?

Now that I may set this Affair in a clear light, and render it, if the Lord please, as profitable to your Souls, as it is great and important, I shall propose the following Method.

I. To shew you what it is to win Christ.

II. Wherewith, or by what he is to be won.

III. Who

III. Who are likeliest to obtain and bid fairest for this Prize.

IV. What Christ is to them that win him, that so great an Account is made of it by the Apostle.

V. What is to be bestowed on them that win him.

VI. Apply the whole.

I begin with the First of these, namely,

I. To shew you what it is to win Christ, and therein give you the plain Import of my Text: It is nothing less, than a regular conforming, and coming up to those Requisites, and Necessaries, whereon, they that win, may enter their Claim to Christ as their own, or the taking those steps, whereby we may advance towards him; as also put in our pleas of Propriety and Interest in him; and, on good grounds, use those appropriative Expressions, which *Thomas* and *Mary* did, and many others have done, saying, *My Lord, and my God*. For it is not with the Winners of Christ, as with those that survey other Mens Lands, tell their Moneys, and read their Securities, but when all is done, they cannot say, that a Foot of those Lands, a Farthing of such Moneys, or a Line of all these Securities are theirs, but anothers: It is the Propriety in whatever is worthy, and excellent, whether Persons or Things, that gives the Proprietor Pleasure and Satisfaction: It was with this view, no doubt, the Spouse said, *my beloved is mine, and I am his*, Cant. 2. 16. and *Mary*, Luke 1. 46, 47. *My Soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*: whoever therefore, on just Grounds, can make those Claims, are, no doubt, of the number of them that have won Christ:

Christ: and this I take to be the plain Import of my Text.

But this will yet more plainly appear, when we consider,

II. *Wherewith, or by what, Christ is to be won by the Children of Men:* And that is,

- 1st. With their Eyes,
- 2^{dly}. With their Cries,
- 3^{dly}. With their Enterprises, and
- 4^{thly}. With their Yielding and Assent.

I begin with the *first* of these, namely, to shew you, that Christ is to be won with the *Eyes* of the Children of Men, by which I don't mean the Eyes of the Body, but of the Mind: of which we read, *Ephesians* 1. 18, 19, 20. *The Eyes of your Understandings being enlightned, that ye might know what is the hope of his Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his Power, towards them that believe, according to the working of his mighty Power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.*

It is with these Eyes, that Christ is to be won. When he, and his transcendent and inestimable Excellency have the wishful Looks, and fixed Views of a well disposed Mind, what can more effectually tend to the winning of Christ? nay, who-soever does thus entertain him, hereby discovering the Signatures of a sincere and hearty Love, may be sure herewith to win Christ: And that this may appear as an undoubted Truth, turn your Eyes to, and let your Minds be determined, by the unerring Words of his own Mouth, now standing on Record, *Cant. 2. 9. Thou hast ravished my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse, thou hast ravished my*
Heart

Heart with one of thine Eyes; while, it may be, with the other, like the Apostle, she was looking with Contempt and Scorn upon all things here below; but with this single, and sincere Eye, beholding, admiring, and earnestly desiring of Christ, where-with he professeth that his Heart was ravished, and repeats it, that we might more fully observe it, as if he had said, "I am herewith surprized, I am herewith overcome, I am won by thee. I am thine, I am no longer so absolutely my own, but, in many kind and gracious respects, I am thine" And thus you see, that Christ is to be won, as it were, with our Eyes; but to carry this beyond all doubt and suspicion, read *Isaiah 45. 22.* where he expressly saith, *Look unto me, and be you saved, all ye ends of the Earth, for I am God:* this, as if he had said, is your Duty and Interest, this is your way of winning me: Let him then have the frequent Desires, and fixed bent of your Minds, and no doubt but you will thus win Christ, and make your Claims to him as your own, as you have heard many others have done.

Secondly, Christ is to be won likewise with the Cries of the Children of Men, when, from a deep sense of their great need, and a full persuasion of his great Ability to help them, they address his Throne, and implore his Mercy, with earnest Importunity, which to do, is not only a likely, but an effectual way, to win Christ: A famous and remarkable instance of this, is the Woman of Canaan, who when Christ was journeying toward the Coasts of Tyre and Sidon, came forth, and address him thus, saying, *Lord, have Mercy on me, thou Son of David,* but at first Christ seemed to take no notice of, or pay any regard to what she said, upon which the Disciples being moved,

moved, said, *Lord send her away, for she crieth after us.*
 To which he replied, that he was not sent but to the
 lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*, whereto she, poor
 Creature, could make no pretention, and might
 therefore think there was now no hope for her; but
 she having a strong bent, and a fixed Resolution
 for the Prize, instantly surmounts this Difficulty,
 and advancing nearer, pressing him yet harder,
 and worshipping him, renewed her Request, saying,
Lord, help me. Then he replied, in a kind of cutting
 and severe Manner, saying, *It is not meet to take*
the Childrens Bread, and cast it to the Dogs; but now
 behold, how aptly and readily, how wisely and
 powerfully she turns the Objection into an Ar-
 gument, the Repulse into a Reason, the put-off
 into a Plea, for, *truth Lord,* says she "thou mayest
 " call me a Dog, or compare me to such an un-
 " clean and unworthy Beast, yet if I may talk
 " with thee, in this thine own way, do not the
 " Dogs partake of the Crumbs that fall from
 " their Masters Table? If then I be a Dog, which
 " I freely own in saying, *truth Lord,* I am a base
 " and unworthy Creature, yet far be it from my
 " Lord, that he should be so hard, as not to al-
 " low me, though a Dog, the Crumbs which fall
 " from his Table; for if both good and bad
 " Men allow this, I cannot think, I will not ad-
 " mit it, that my Lord the Son of *David*, who is
 " the best of all, should be thus worse than all."
 Then said the Lord, as being overcome herewith,
O Woman, great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as
thou wilt. Now I appeal to you, whether this
 Woman did not win Christ, and that in the man-
 ner I am now speaking of: This is an instance in-
 deed so stupendious, that its enough to astonish
 the very Angels, that Majesty, Mercy, Grace and
 Goodness, even that which is Divine, should stoop
 thus

thus low to be at the Pleasure of so poor a Creature : It was but Crumbs that she craved, but who can count her Cargo? It was but little she spake for with her Tongue, but what Tongue is able to tell how much she got, as included in that extensive Grant, *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt?* And as before you have heard, that Christ professed his Heart was ravished with the Eye of his Spouse, so is it as much now in this Case, therefore he says, *O Woman, great is thy Faith:* "For though I have carried it shy and strange, yea, severe and hard, as did *Joseph*, sometime to his Brethren, yet he at last was forced to say, I am *Joseph*." So here, as if Christ had thus said, "I am *Jesus*, and tho' I have appeared thus to daunt and discourage you, and as it were to break thy Heart, yet such are thy Patience, thy Prudence, thy Courage and Constancy, thy Hope and thy Faith, that my Bowels are moved and troubled for thee, I am weary of forbearing, I can hold no longer, I am overcome, I am won by thee: I yield to these powerful and prevailing Charms, and in witness thereof say to thee, *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*" This Case you have at large in *Matth.* 15. 22, to the 29th. Nor was the Psalmist a Stranger to this way, who took many successful steps herein, *Psalms* 40. 1. and 34. 17. The Lord saw the Afflictions, and heard the Cries of the Children of *Israel*, before he came down to deliver them, so likewise the Lord saw the Tears, and heard the Cries of *Hezekiah*; from all which I hope you will own, and yield, that Christ is to be won with the Cries of the Children of Men. But then,

Thirdly, Christ is to be won by the Enterprizes and Adventures of the Children of Men. You know it is common amongst Men, when any thing

is set forth to be won, there is something or other to be undertaken and done, by those who design to win; and on the right and true Performance of what is required, a pleadable Title depends: For it would be extremely vain, to claim a Propriety in the Prize, without pleading a Conformity to what is required; so in some respects, it must also be in this Case: How idle and insignificant must they make the Apostles Talk, of the winning of Christ, to be, who will admit nothing of this kind? Now, besides what has been already said, of that whereby Christ is to be won, there is this great Point of noble Adventure, to wit, submissively to take up, and constantly to bear, and wear the Cross; for our Lord himself hath assured us, that he which takes not up his Cross and follows him, is not worthy of him. They then that would effectually win Christ, must, you see, take up, and bear the Cross. The blind Man, whose Eyes Christ opened, won him in this way: How was he envied of others, because Christ had opened his Eyes, and was found afterwards to speak in his Favour, arguing that he must be of God, and a good Man, and that it was a marvellous thing, that they knew him not, when he had opened the Eyes of one that was born blind, the like not having been done since the beginning of the World? And when he asked them, whether they also would be his Disciples, they insulted and reviled him, and despised his Talk, saying, Dost thou, who wast altogether born in Sin, teach us; And they cast him out; but Christ soon found him under the burthen of this Cross; and to the end that he might win Christ, and enjoy the Pleasure of so great a Prize, said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? And he poor Man said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe. I, saith Christ,

Christ, that talketh with thee, am he; then he believed, and worshipped him. May I not say therefore, that he then won Christ, and that in this way of bravely taking up, and bearing the Cross. *Moses* is famous upon this Account, for when he came to Years, he refused to be called the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, chusing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasure of Sin, which is but for a Season; esteeming the Reproaches of Christ, greater Riches than the Treasures of *Egypt*. (Mark it) the worst of Christ, even the Reproaches of Christ, are preferred to all the Treasures and Pleasures of *Egypt*. Now is it not plain, that the blind Man and *Moses* won Christ. *John* 9. *Heb.* 11. 24, 25, 26. And they that would win Christ must expect to bear, and wear this Cross; to be accounted and treated as the World's Fools, and to be born down with Satan's old Cant, and popular Cry, Have any of the Chief Priests, Scribes, Elders, and Rulers, of the People, believed? Do these make such Fools of themselves? Not they, but only those base ignorant and accursed People, which know not the Law, these are to bare the brands of Infamy and Reproach; but no matter for that, seeing the Lord decides between the different Claimers of Wisdom, on the side of them that walk not in the Council, nor thus after the Cries of the Ungodly, *Psalms* 1. 1. *John* 7. 47, 48, 49. Moreover, they that would win Christ, must adventure out into the unpleasant Paths of apparent Loss; *St. Paul* is very exemplary to us in this, who in the Verses preceding the Text, gives us to understand the gradual Steps he took towards this great Prize, and with every Advance that he made, was constrained, and yet contented to lay aside, and lose all his antecedent, and otherwise admirable Excellencies, drop-

ing one thing after another, till he comes naked to Christ; assuring us, that if any other Man had whereof to have Confidence or Comfort in the Flesh, he more, who was circumcised the 8th Day, of the Stock of *Israel*, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; touching the Law, a Pharisee; concerning Zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the Righteousness which is in the Law, blameless; but what things were Gain to me, those I counted Loss for Christ; yea doubtless, and I count all things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win Christ. This is the Mark I aim at, this the Course I steer, and the Steps I take; by all which the Apostle very strongly suggests, that there is nothing in Religion, neither Jewish, or Christian, that is comparable unto Christ. A Person may obtain Baptism, so did *Simon Magus*; or Church Membership, as the foolish Virgins; or the Table of the Lord, as they that eat and drank in his Presence; or the Gifts of Prophecy, as they that did so in his Name, whom yet he will not own. Let us then above all, be sure to win Christ, and reckon no Loss too great, to win that which is unspeakably greater; should therefore your Morality and Self-Righteousness, be as near and dear to you, as either a right Hand, or a right Eye, yet these must be parted with. Could you say with *St. Paul*, touching the Righteousness of the Law, you were blameless, yet you see, he is not only content to lose it, but to count it as Dogs Meat, or Dung, that he might win Christ; and surely herein he is very exemplary and instructive to us. Know then assuredly as ever you would win Christ, you must attempt it only in these Paths, and with these Views. But,

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Christ is also to be won by the *Assent* and *Yielding* of the Children of Men; when he appears to make his kind Addresses and generous Offers, to attract and draw us with the Charms of matchless Love, to answer all Objections, and remove whatever tends to retard or hinder our Assent and Yielding to the most fair and reasonable Proposals, attended with the highest and strongest Assurances of the greatest Favours: If hereby we are brought to consent and yield, then, and thereby we do, or may be said to win Christ. Every one who would win Christ, must be espoused to him, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 7. 4. Ye are become dead to the Law, by the Body of Christ, that you might be married to another, even to him that is raised from the Dead*, meaning Christ, *that you should bring forth Fruit unto God*: And I wish it could be truly said of every one of us, as St. Paul said to the *Corinthians*, that he had espous'd them to one Husband, that he might present them as a chaste Virgin unto Christ: Of the old World it is noted, they were marrying, and given in Marriage; even so it is now: But how few are there to be found as willing and desirous, especially early, of Marriage-Union with Christ, as with one another? Notwithstanding to our being thus espoused to Christ, in an actual Sense, nothing on our Parts can be more wanting, than the consenting and yielding of our Minds. And methinks, we should hardly forbear it, when we consider, how kind and free, how fair and full, how wise and just, as well as unexceptionable his Proposals and Offers are, recorded *Hosea 2. 19. I, saith he, will betroth thee unto me for ever*, and that is more than any Creature can do: Their Acts of this kind are of a short Continuance; in the Marriage-Knot, there is this Limit, *Till Death shall part*, but this is for ever. Death, which

which cuts and breaks all other conjugal Knots, doth, as it were, strengthen this; Death breaks human Ties, and parts the Creatures, but it brings Christ and the Christian nearer: And that we might have the strongest Assurances, of Christ's Aim herein being our Advantage, and not his own, and that he can have no mean Ends in these his Offers, he adds, that he will do it *in Righteousness and in Judgment, yea, in loving Kindness, and in tender Mercies, and in Faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord*: To be sure, this is meant of all such, who sincerely accept of, and consent, and yield to these his many and moving Offers. And sure, in return to what you have heard from him, you should be ready to say within your selves, "Thou hast ravished our Hearts, our Jesus, our Christ, thou hast ravished our Hearts, our King, and our God, we are surprized and overcome, we are taken and won with these thy Wonders of Love; we admire, and accept, most thankfully, these thy Favours; we yield and resign our selves unto thee". Which whoever does, are certainly of the Number of them that win Christ. And thus I have shewn you what it is to win Christ, and whereby it is to be done.

III. I am to shew you, *who are likeliest to obtain and bid fairest for this so great a Prize*, that so you may be stirred up, when you hear how near you are thereunto; that even with one Step it may be taken by you, and for ever after be yours: And who they be which are thus likely, hopeful, and promising, I shall describe to you, in these following Particulars.

First, They are such who are awaken'd and rous'd out of their carnal Security, wherein they have been kept asleep, unconcern'd about, and not appriz'd of their many and mighty Hazards,

zards, their dreadful and amazing Dangers; but being awaken'd, these instantly appear, and like a furious and formidable Flood, or Inundation, with a rapid Force and Torrent, pour in upon them; so that it's no wonder to hear them say, and that with great Anxiety and Concern, *What shall we do to be saved*: And of whoever this is true, of them it may be truly said, they are near, yea, very near, the winning of Christ. An apparent Instance of this, is the Case of the sturdy Jaylor, who, having receiv'd an Order and Charge from the Magistrates, to put *Paul and Silas* into Prison, he, as well to discover his Envy, as his Ability, his Violence, as his Vigilance, 'tis said, *thrust them into the inner Prison, and made their Feet fast in the Stocks*; and this being done, goes away, to be sure, as secure in Satan's Bands, as he had left *Paul and Silas* in his; not thinking, much less not desiring to hear them preach that Night to him and his House, or that this Night he and they were to win Christ: But so it must be, as the Event makes it evident, for at Midnight *Paul and Silas* prayed, and sang Praises to God, which Devotion of theirs was honour'd with an Earthquake, that shook the Foundations of the Prison, and made the Prison Doors flee open, and loosed the Prisoners Bands, and awaken'd the Keeper, who, finding the Doors open, and supposing that the Prisoners were gone, and knowing what would be the dangerous Consequences thereof, to himself: Having acted or play'd the bad Man before, was now about to play the mad Man, by attempting to kill himself; but *Paul* cried out, and said, *do thy self no harm, for we are all here*: Then he called for a Light, and sprang in, and falling down before *Paul and Silas*, said, *Sirs, What must I do to be saved?* And they said, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt*

shalt be saved, and thy House: And to the end that he and they might so believe, *they spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his House,* and he and they believed, and so won Christ. And whoever are thus truly awaken'd, however it be done, are in a near and likely Way, of winning Christ.

Secondly, Such as are wounded and broken in Heart, for breaking the Laws of God, and are inwardly sick and grieved for the mighty Guilt of their manifold Sins, these are in a near and likely Way for the winning of Christ, *Matt. 11. 12. The whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.* When Christ appear'd, to break up as it were, his high and heavenly Commission, one Thing in special, among many others therein inserted, is this, that he was sent to *heal the broken hearted, Luke 4. 18.* So in *Acts 2. 37. When they heard this, they were prick'd in their Hearts, and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* And tho' this may seem the same Thing mention'd before, yet with respect to Degree, and many times as to Duration, it is at least very distinguishable from the former, as may be intimated in our Lord's Invitation, *Matt. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest;* the Application of such Persons to Christ, is after more Exercise and Experience; some, it may be, accept of, and close with the Object, on the first Appearance and Offer, but others many times keep long off, and at last are more hardly brought so to do: Especially, if Satan have been a Minister of Righteousness unto them, teaching them to work out and establish a Righteousness of their own, while they hearken and adhere to this, it will effectually keep them from submitting themselves to the *Righteousness of God.* And tho' Satan do thus some-
I times

times interrupt, yet the Work being of God, they are recover'd, and apply themselves to Christ for Righteousness and Strength, being now assured, that Satan's Remedies are as dangerous as their own Diseases have been, so that it holds and stands good, that those who are broken in Heart, and sick in their Souls, by reason of their Sins, are in a likely Way of winning Christ; so did she who washed Christ's Feet with her Tears, and wiped them with the Hair of her Head, to whom he said, *Thy Sins which are many, are forgiven thee, and thy Faith hath saved thee*, Luke 7. 37.

Thirdly, Such are likely to win Christ, who with a brave and exemplary Resolution, constantly wait at Wisdom's Doors, and watch daily at her Gates, keeping thus within the Bounds of the Promise, *Prov. 8. 34, 35. Blessed is the Man that heareth me, watching daily at my Gates, waiting at the Posts of my Doors, for whoso findeth me, findeth Life, and shall obtain Favour of the Lord.* The Gentiles having once heard the Gospel, desir'd to hear the same Things the next Sabbath Day, which being come, almost all the City came together, and upon hearing the same were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal Life believed. And did they not then win Christ? And was it not in this Way? In which, whoever conscientiously and constantly attend and keep, are likely to win Christ, *Acts 13. 48—52.* But,

Fourthly, They that would win Christ, must be content to strip and disrobe themselves of their antecedent Attire and Atchievements, how excellent soever they may appear, or tending never so much to raise their Conceits, inhanche their Comforts, or command their Confidence, even tho' religious Rites, and an external and unspotted Righteousness, as the Crown and Glory of all,

are the Foundation thereof, yet all this is to be parted with, tho' it stick as close to many almost as their Skins ; for tho' the *Ethiopian* cannot change his Skin, nor the *Leopard* his Spots, yet they who would, and do win Christ, are content to be touched close in this so tender a Point, and readily cast off, and renounce this for Christ. And in this grand Affair, I have shewn you already, what a bright and shining Example the Apostle is herein unto us, as in my Text, and the Context ; and therefore shall say no more of it now, but herewith pass to the next Thing : Which is to shew you, under the *Fourth General Head*, what Christ is to them that win him.

IV. I am now come to shew, what Christ is to them that win him, that so great an Account is made of it by the Apostle, which may appear in the following Particulars.

1. Christ is to them that win him a Friend, and that of the best kind, a most constant and able Friend. Mere human Friendship, is at the best but fickle, and uncertain ; or if Kindness continues, yet Capacity may, and often times does fail, or the Distances of Dwellings may hinder friendly Help and Communications. But nothing of all this can interfere with the Friendship of Christ, who in this, as in all other Things, is always the same, *Yesterday, to Day, and for Ever* ; in the Prospect and View of this, did the Spouse say, *Cant. 5. 16. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O Daughters of Jerusalem.* That which seems to highthen and compleat the Calamity of *Job*, was this, that besides the Loss of his Children and Substance in the World, and the grievous Affliction in his Body, to all this was added, the frowning and forsaking of his Friends, or their degenerating and becoming his Enemies, *Job 19. 14, &c.* But in the

the 25th Verse, as amidst, or under all these, he speaks with an Air of heavenly Pleasure; saying, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth, and tho' after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God.* As if he had said, "In this my sad, my sinking Circumstance, wherein almost every Thing concurs to make my Life miserable, yet this is my Rest, Peace, and Pleasure, that I have a living, loving, lasting, and never-failing Friend: Who is so well affected towards them that win him, and doth so sympathize with them, that 'tis said in all their Afflictions, *he was afflicted*, and will in his own time effectually deliver them out of them all, and wipe away all Tears from their Eyes". And is not such a Friend worth the winning? I appeal to your Consciences, whether you can except against the Reasonableness of your utmost Endeavours to this End. But,

2. They that win Christ, do moreover win a noble and generous Surety, who, notwithstanding our Debts, of more than *ten thousand Talents*, is contented to have his Name inserted, or put into our Obligation, and to hold himself strictly and firmly bound to see the Demands of Law and Justice fully satisfied, knowing well at the same time, that it would be demanded and required at his Hands; and that nothing less than the Shedding of his most precious Blood, and laying down his most bright and unspotted Life, would answer this End. Yet notwithstanding all this, he bravely adventures hereon, and that not with a faint, but a most fervent Mind; assuring us by his Word, it was a strong Desire of, and Delight in doing the greatest Good to the Children of Men, that led him out into, and carried him on through all the difficult Work,

and dreadful Conflicts, which attended him in the Discharge of this Obligation, *Heb. 7. 22. Prov. 8. 31.*

3dly, They that win Christ, do win a Counsellor or Advocate, and such an one as does indeed surpass all others, *Isai. 9. 6. His Name shall be called wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God.* When weighty Affairs are depending in Courts of Judicature, is it not often times, with many a mighty Concern, to attain the ablest Counsel? But here is one that out-does them all, who neither needs, nor will take a Fee, but will act as free for the Poor, as for the Rich; and the greatest Motive with him, is a free and willing Client, committing his Case and Cause unto him, *My little Children, saith John, I write unto you, that ye sin not; and if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; not to animate or encourage in a Course of Sin, but that none, who are surprized or betrayed into it, unwittingly, or unwillingly, should afterwards sink under the Sense thereof: And tho' now, it may be, they are not able to speak for themselves, yet even then they should remember that there is one in the Court above, that both can and will do it for them, whose Blood speaks better Things than that of Abel, even Pardon and Peace to all that repent, and by Faith apply unto him, to whom there is therefore now no Condemnation. This Advocate effectually pleading off whatever may be advanc'd towards such an End; and that by the Merit of his own Blood, which is the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, ordered in all Things, and sure. And is not such a Counsellor and Advocate worth the winning? For such an one is he indeed, to all that truly do so: But,*

4thly, Christ is to all them that win him, a Witness, and this is often times of great Consequence among

among the Children of Men, when not only their Names, or Reputations, but their Estates, and very Lives may be at Stake, and depend on a precarious, perverse, and wicked Witness: With what Anxiety and Concern will one, in such a Case, desire and endeavour to obtain a substantial and sufficient Witness, to counter-balance and confound the former? Why, such a Witness as this, is our Lord Jesus, to them that win him; this is *the faithful and true Witness*, Revel. 1. 5. Nor can it be, but as a great Blessing, that he is promised to be given as a Witness, as well as a Leader, and a Commander to the People, Isa. 55. 4. He is a Witness to Men, of the gracious Purposes and Designs of the Great God, of his Counsels and Schemes, concerning the Salvation of lost Mankind, by himself: To this is owing what we have on sacred Record, to such an end; nor is Christ wanting in bearing Witness to God, of all the Desires and Devotions of them that win him; there is not the least Good in them, or done by them, but he beareth Witness of it to the Father; as also of all their Weaknesses and Wants, their Afflictions and Miseries, of all their Enemies and Insults, Oppressions and Persecutions, of what Kind and Degree soever, and whatsoever pertain or belong unto them, this Christ witnesseth: And thus you see, that they who win Christ, have both Advocate and Witness on their sides, and that of the best Sort; and what then can hinder Things going in their Favour? In the Prospect and Pleasure of this, no doubt Job said, Chap. 16. 19. *My Witness is in Heaven, and my Record is on High*; which Consideration hath an apt and admirable Tendency to support and bear up the Mind, under what tends to bear us down; keep therefore
in

in Remembrance, what Christ is in this respect, to all such as win him. But then,

Fifthly, Christ is in a peculiar Manner a Judge to them that win him. Now when we consider, that whatever be a Man's Cause, he hath Advocate, Witness, and Judge on his side; is there not great Reason to hope, that Things will be brought to a happy Issue? Lo, this is the Case of all who win Christ; for behold, when Christ shall appear, with an audible and Heaven-shaking Shout, saying, *Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment*; when many shall fly and cry to *the Rocks and Mountains to fall* on them, to hide them from the Face of the Lamb; for the great Day of his Wrath is come; all this their Out-cry and Application will be to no purpose, for all must appear, when the Earth, Sea, Death and Hell must resign, yield, and deliver up all that is therein; yet even then will he in the first Place, adjudge them to his right Hand, which now do win him, and there honour them to sit with him, in judging all others, both Angels and Men; and after all, they shall enjoy everlasting Life and Happiness, together with him: Even such a Judge and Judgment they win, who win the Lord Jesus, *Matth. 25. 33. 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. Rev. 20. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10.*

Sixthly, They that win Christ, do moreover win a King, and such an one, as is indeed the *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*; and we know that what sometimes is not done by the Judge, is yet done by the Authority of the Crown: And that all Things needful may be done for them that win Christ; he is to this end made to become all unto them, and though he is King over all, yet in a more peculiar Manner is he their King; to subdue and bring down all their Enemies, both internal and external, as Sin, Death and the Devil,
and

and finally to bestow on them his royal and eternal Favours; therefore he will appear to act not only as a Judge, but also as a King, *then shall the King say unto them on his right Hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World, Matth. 25.*

34. Rev. 19. 16. But,

Seventhly, They that win Christ, do not only win a God, but the true God, who is so by Nature as well as Name, being the *Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*. *Isaiah* stiles him the *mighty God*, who as *St. John* assures us, made the World, and all Things that are therein; and it is he that upholds, maintains and governs all, to the great End of his Father's and his own Glory, *John 1. Isaiah 9. 6. 1 John 5. 20*. Nor is it possible that any should win a greater or better Prize than this is, and such do they win, who win Christ; and higher than this we cannot possibly ascend, or advance; yet I shall endeavour to descend to some other near and affecting Considerations. And therefore,

Eighthly, They that win Christ, do in him also win and find a Brother, a Brother offended, saith *Solomon*, is harder to be won than a strong City; but though Christ hath been highly offended with our manifold and great Provocations, yet they that win him, do find him to be the best Brother, and the first-born among many Brethren; for both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one, for which Cause he is not ashamed to call them Brethren, *Heb. 2. 11*. And he said unto *Mary*, Go tell my Brethren, that I ascend to my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and to your God, *John 20. 17. Rom. 8. 29*. wherefore in all Things, it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-

Priest,

Priest, in things pertaining to God, Heb. 2. 17. And on this Foundation doth the Apostle raise the Doctrine of the transcendant and inestimable Excellency of Christ, in his royal Priesthood, and makes this his main Drift and Scope, in the consequent Part of the Epistle; arguing from this very Point, that he is, and must needs be closely touched with the feeling of our Infirmities; and that having been sorely Tempted himself, is both able and willing to succour them that are so: And is not such a Brother as this worth the Winning, in whom are found the Perfections of divine and human Nature? But,

Ninthly, They that win Christ, do moreover win an Heir, and this you know is sometimes a matter of great Consequence and Concern among the Children of Men, especially when the Heir is of great Blood, Family and Fortune; but know ye, that there is none who equal, or can compare with Christ, who is every way, and in all things, most surpassingly Excellent, who being the Eternal and Only-begotten Son of the eternal God, is the most rightful and undoubted Heir of all Things, *Heb. 1. 2.* And they that win him, are joint Heirs with him, as it is written, *Rom. 8. 17. If Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joynt Heirs with Christ.* Now to be Heirs of all Things, and of God, which is the Glory of all; this is the Glory of all them who win Christ; and who can forbear, at least to desire the being of this happy Number.

Tenthly, Christ is to such as win him an Husband, and this is the nearest of all human, personal Relations, wherein two are constituted, and made to become one, and in this near, dear and durable Relation, doth the Lord own and acknowledge them that win him, *Isa. 54. 5. Thy Maker is thy Husband,*

Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name; the God of the whole Earth shall he be called: And with this very Argument doth the Lord endeavour to turn the backsliding Children of Israel, saying, Return thou backsliding Israel, for I am married unto you, Jer. 3. 14. And hence are those abundant Expressions of Benevolence and Good-Will towards his Church and People, in taking Care of, and making such ample Provision for them, both temporal and spiritual. Nay, from hence arises those admirable Condescensions of the divine Being, to dwell with Dust and Ashes, to have intimate Fellowship and Communion with worthless Worms, and to take Pleasure and Delight in such despicable Beings; for the Truth of which, take Christ's own Testimony, in answer to that Question, *How is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not unto the World; if, says Christ, a Man love me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him.* And such an Husband as this, is Christ Jesus, even most benevolent and kind, as well as able, constant and communicative to those that win him.

Eleventhly, and Lastly, as to this; Christ is more-over to them that win him, a most bountiful and generous Testator, who having well and wisely made his last Will and Testament, confirm'd the same by his most precious Blood, making all the Legacies therein inserted, certain and sure to all the Legatees: Now it is accounted a great Privilege amongst Men, to be remembred by others in their last Wills, especially if they be such as are rich, and of great Worth in the World, and they share greatly therein; but there is no one, of no Class nor Condition, of no Rank nor Degree whatever, that is any Thing in Comparison with Christ, in this Affair, whose Testamental Gifts and

D

Settle.

Settlements do infinitely out-do them all, and that, both as to Kind and Duration, they being spiritual and eternal, as well as infallibly certain as to their Enjoyment, *Heb. 9. 15, 16, 17. For this Cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by Means of Death, for the Redemption of the Transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the Promise of eternal Inheritance; for where a Testament is, there must also of Necessity be the Death of the Testator, for a Testament is of Force after that Men are dead, otherwise it is of no Strength at all, while the Testator liveth.*

And as St. Paul saith to the *Galatians*, though it be but a Man's Covenant, or Testament, yet, when it is confirmed, no Man disannulleth, or addeth thereto; and tho' it behoved Christ thus to die and confirm his Will, yet that in this, as in all other Things, he might have the Pre-eminence, he rose again the third Day, and now ever liveth to see his Will executed: And thus Christ gives to them that win him, the Comforts which are contain'd in the Words of the Institution of the Supper, saying, *This Cup is the Cup of the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you, drink you all of it.* But then,

V. I am to shew you, what Christ hath to bestow upon, and to be enjoy'd by them that win him; and as before we took some Notice of his Will, so now are we come to the Inventory of what is left to be enjoyed, of which St. Paul's Draught, or Description, is in the most absolute and universal Terms, saying, *All is yours, 1 Cor. 3. 21.* And seeing all Things are theirs that win Christ, we may be sure of some Particulars; and those whereof I shall treat may be reduc'd to the following Heads. As,

First, The Treasures of Grace.

Secondly,

Secondly, The Tokens and Trophies of Honour.

And,

Thirdly, The Mansions of Glory : Of all which, they undoubtedly shall have their Shares. I begin therefore with the

First, The Treasures of Grace, all which are opened to them that win Christ, he having the Keys and Keeping, as well as the Order and Measure of giving out these in his own Hands; for it pleased the Father, that in him should all Fulness dwell, that of his Fulness we might receive, and Grace for Grace, Coloss. 1. 19. John 1. 14, 15, 16. And if we have the least Regard to any, or all these, let us be sure to win Christ. And these Treasures of Grace, which are better than Gold, include in them the following Particulars. As,

1. Pardoning Grace, or the Remission of all Sin, tho' of a scarlet Colour, or crimson Dye, this is one of those gracious Favours and great Blessings which the Lord bestows upon his People. When therefore David would describe the blessed Man, he brings this first into the Account, as of great Concern therein, saying, *Blessed is he whose Transgression is forgiven, and whose Sin is covered, and to whom the Lord imputeth Righteousness without Works.* Now how great soever this Blessing is, it is that which comes by, and through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom all the Prophets gave Witness, *That whosoever believeth in him, should receive Remission of Sins,* Acts 10. 43. And he saith by Isaiah, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy Transgressions, for my own sake, and will not remember thy Sins,* Isai. 45. 25. And the Apostle, *Eph. 1. 7. in whom (that is in Christ) we have Redemption, through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sin, according to the Riches of his Grace; and it is he that hath loved us, and washed us from our*

Sins in his own Blood, Rev. 1. 5. And as without shedding of Blood there is no Remission, so there is no other Blood that will answer this End, but the Blood of him that is God as well as Man, *Acts* 20. 28. And this is the Subject of that new and noble Song, sung by the Elders, in the highest Strains, and to the direct and everlasting Honour of our great Redeemer, saying, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to take the Book, and loose the Seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation*, Rev. 5. 9. Now this great and gracious, this delightful and joyous Blessing, is the undoubted Portion of all that win Christ; and if any here observe that I have omitted that great Blessing of Regeneration, it is true, and I have done it, because I take that for granted, concerning all that truly win Christ, and that their so doing is a Consequent of their being won, in a great Measure, by Christ; for it was after Christ had apprehended *Paul*, that he endeavour'd so much to apprehend Christ, and that for which himself had been apprehended of by him: This I take to be a good Effect, at least, following the good Works being begun, which doth not now so directly lye in my Way. And therefore,

2dly, Justification is another great Blessing, in which they share that win Christ, for tho' the Pardon of Sin is suppos'd, and included in this, yet is it too short a great deal, fully to set it forth; and as *Dr. Owen* hath well observed, tho' Justification and Pardon are not to be divided, yet they are to be distinguished: Justification therefore, according to the Scripture, and the *Doctor*, is a Law-Term, as is also Condemnation; as therefore Condemnation don't make the Condemned guilty, but being found so by Examination and Evidence,

is thereon and therefore condemned, so Justification don't make the Person just, but being found so, is thereon justified; hence inferring, that the Object of Justification is a righteous Person, which he effectually proves, by collecting all the Places both of the Old and New Testament, where the Word is used, shewing clearly, that it cannot be otherwise truly understood (only one Place excepted) as *that God might be justify'd in his Sayings*, and *Wisdom is justify'd of her Children*: And the Lord gave it in Charge to the Judges of *Israel*, that in the Causes which should come before them, they should justify the Righteous, and condemn the Wicked; and to act the Reverse was an Abomination unto him: But that Pardon, as well as Condemnation, have both to do with the Guilty; of which some sometimes are punished, and others pardoned, but not justified, appears from the Instance of *Joab*, and *Abiather* the Priest, the former being put to Death, but the latter let live, tho' both were guilty; yet *Abiather* was not justified; but *whom the Lord pardoneth, them he also justifieth*; yet so as that they are distinguishable, and that as arising and coming from distinct, but undivided Causes, as is the active and passive Obedience of Christ: And the Imputation of both these distinct Causes, to the distinct and yet conjoyned Ends of Remission and Justification to them that believe, is that which doth properly constitute and formally denominate a Person just and righteous in the Sight of God, which the *Doctor* makes the formal Cause of Justification. And hereon, God's owning, acknowledging, declaring, and absolving of them as such, whatever Conscience, Men, or Devils may alledge or plead to the contrary, is that wherein Justification doth actively and properly consist: This, in short, as near as I can remember, is according to the *Doctor*,
tho'

tho' it be Twenty Years or more since I read his worthy Book of Justification, *Rom. 3. 4. Matt. 11. 19. Exod. 23. 7. Deut. 25. 1. Prov. 17. 15. 1 Kings 8. 32. Isa. 5. 22, 23.* But as Justification, in a spiritual Sense, is the Prerogative of God, so it is that which is the undoubted Portion of them that believe, or do in the Sense of my Text win Christ. *Acts 13. 39.*

3dly, These share in the Grace and Favour of Peace and Reconciliation with God, tho' Sin hath made a Difference and Distance between God the offended Sovereign, and Men the offending Subjects, yet this is made up, and an inviolable and everlasting Peace concluded betwixt God and all that win his Son: Yea, tho' many Clouds may arise, and obscure the Light and Comfort thereof, yet, even then, as the Sun when clouded from our Eyes, shines in its native Lustre, Brightness, and Glory, so the Peace that is made by the Blood of Christ, is more firm and stable than the Heavens and Earth, *Isa. 54. 10. For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath Mercy on thee.* Oh thou afflicted, and not comforted, take notice that this Peace is consistent with Trouble, Affliction, and Misery; and therefore said Christ to his Disciples, *In the World you shall have Trouble, but in me you shall have Peace, John 16. 33. Rom. 5. 1. Eph. 2. 14, 15, 16, 17. Who hath made Peace by the Blood of his Cross, and by whom we receive the Atonement, and in whom God was reconciling the World to himself, Rom. 5. 11. 2 Cor. 5. 19.* All which truly belong to those that win Christ.

But then,

4thly, Adoption, or the taking these into the Family of the Almighty, this certainly is a very great

great Blessing, and bright Discovery of divine Love and Grace, that the Children of Men, nay of the Devil and Hell, by Deeds and Desert, should notwithstanding be made the Sons and Daughters of the most High and ever blessed God; surely *this is the Lord's doings*, and it ought to be *marvellous in our Eyes*, for to as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name, 1 John 12. 13. Where note, that though they were *predestinated to the Adoption of Children*, Eph. 1. 5. yet it remained, that they should become so, by being born again, *not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God*: And do now, in the actual Receiving of Christ, exert and put forth those Principles of Grace they received of God, in their Regeneration, and so become both passively and actively the Children of God, by Faith in Christ Jesus, as all do that are so, as witnesseth the Apostle, Gal. 3. 26.

5thly, The Preservation and Security of those, in this their regenerated, remitted, justified, and adopted State, to their being finally brought to everlasting Glory, are all from those Treasures which are opened to, and bestow'd upon them that win Christ, and do result and arise from and rebound to the perpetual Praise and Glory of rich, free, sovereign and sufficient Grace, repositied in the Hands of our Great Redeemer and Saviour, who upon the firmest Principles of an everlasting Love, and mediatorial Engagements, holds himself obliged to see all this made good, and therefore did he say, *other Sheep I have, which are not of this Fold, them also I must bring in*. And that he came not down from Heaven to do his own Will, but the Will of him that sent him, that of all that the Father hath given him, he should lose nothing, but

but raise it up at the last Day, and that his Sheep should or would hear his Voice, and follow him, and that he would give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, for that none is able to pluck them, neither out of his nor his Father's Hands, *John* 10. 28, 29. But then,

Secondly, I am to speak of those Tokens and Trophies of Honour, which are to be bestowed on the Winners of Christ, such as to *eat of the Tree of Life* and *hidden Mannah*, surmount all danger of the *second Death*, have the *white Stone*, and in the Stone a *new Name*, which no Man knoweth, but he that receiveth it; and have the *Morning Star*, and Power over the Nations, to rule them with a Rod of Iron, and bind their Kings with Chains, and Nobles with Fetters, which Honour is attributed to *all the Saints*; these are all, no doubt, great Favours, and high Honours; of which to use *St. Paul's* Words, I may say, we cannot now speak particularly, but no doubt they include the Completion and Confirmation of Happiness, wherein there will be no Guard of Angels, nor flaming Sword in the way to obstruct, or hinder the coming to the *Tree of Life*: Nor Corruption to rise, in contemptuous Murmurings against the hidden Manna, as *light Bread*; nor any Fear or Horror of the second Death, having bravely surmounted, and being got above the same. Neither any more danger of Guilt, nor dread of great and desperate Enemies, these being all, either subdued or destroyed, the white Stone being a Note of Victory and Conquest, nor any Anxiety of holding and keeping, either a good Name, or Place, but, as everlasting Denizens of, and Dwellers in the City of their God, bearing and wearing continually the Name of both, as an indelible Character that never wears out, have a royal Seat at the right Hand of him that is *King of*

of Kings, and Lord of Lords, enjoying those Mansions of Glory which Christ is long since gone to prepare for them that win him; where they *shall see as they are seen, and know as they are known.* When all Imperfections shall be done away, and that which is perfect is come; then Jacob shall not halt, nor Leah be tender ey'd, there shall be no Troubles of Heart, nor trickling Tears from their Eyes, God having wiped these, with all their Causes, intirely away; for *there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain, for the former Things are passed away,* then shall the Righteous shine forth, not only as the Stars, but as the Sun for ever and ever; everlasting Joys shall be upon their Heads, and all Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away; then Hearts and Harps shall be in tune, and truly set, to sound forth, in the highest Strains, the Praise and Glory of him that sits upon the Throne, and the Lamb, for ever and ever; then the bright, pure, and populous Regions will ring of, and resound with those perpetual and ravishing Hallelujas: All which now, to apprehend and express, as it is in it self, the best of Men are but as little Children to the things of Men; and this I think is intimated by the Apostle, when he saith, *when I was a Child, I thought, spoke, and understood as a Child; but when I became a Man, I put away childish Things;* yet as if he had said, though now I am a Man as to former Things, yet but a Child to future ones; and therefore did he see but in part, and *prophecie in part;* nay, the part that he did see, was but darkly, as through a Glass; how much more may we say, that we see rather through a Vail? Nor is it to be expected to be much better, till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, to a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fullness of Christ; and

E

there-

therefore now, as a Child in this Affair, I am obliged to desist, and leave this, referring you to these several Places of Scripture, *Rev.* 2. 7, 11, 17. *Chap.* 3. 5, 12, 21. *John* 14. 2, 3. *Rev.* 21. 4. *1 Cor.* 13. 9, 10, 11, 12. *Eph.* 4. 13. And,

Having thus done with the five general Heads first proposed, I now come to the Application of the whole. And that,

I. In a Use of Admiration, whereto we are justly call'd, by a most stupendious Scene of amazing Wonders, that is herein opened to our View, even that a Person, so great and good, as is our Lord Jesus Christ, who is *the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, should, notwithstanding, be set as a Prize to be won by the Children of Men; what a stupendious and amazing Stoop is this, that he who was in *the Form of God, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*, yet did, and does thus humble himself, as it is written, *Isa.* 52. 14. that *many were astonished* at him, and well indeed they might, beholding herein the matchless and incomparable Compassion and Condescension of our Lord Jesus, who as he had no need of such as we, so neither can he be any way advantaged or advanced by us; but he hath allowed and allotted the Advantage, as before you have heard, to them that win *him*: And therefore, when he was about to leave the World, he desired no more, with respect to himself, of the Father, but that he might be glorified with him; and that with the same Glory which he had before the World began; and herein he acted on the highest Principles of Right and Reason, for as it was no more that he desired, so there was no more that could be by him had, than absolute, infinite, and eternal Perfections, which he always had, though now they are clouded with a mortal Body, and
this

this Vail of Mortality he longed to put off, and have it swallowed up of Life; nor can this his Prayer be otherwise well understood, than in relation to his Divinity, and that share of Glory his Humanity was to possess in Right of its personal Union therewith.

2. Here is Matter and Cause of Admiration, that such a Person and Prize, of such unspeakable Worth and Excellency, as is our Lord Jesus Christ, with all the Advantages and Blessings that flow from him, should not only be proposed as a Prize to be won by the Children of Men, but that it should be done in such a Manner, as hath been described, to wit, with their Eyes, Cries, Adventures and Assent; we are neither required to fly in the Air, as doth the Eagle, or to fix and settle our Abode there, nor to carry the Mountains on our Backs, or to empty the Seas, neither to travel over them on our Feet, nor to go up to Heaven, or to stop the Course of the Sun, that we might win Christ, I say, no such impracticable, or impossible Things are prescribed to the attaining this End, but that which is expressed in the most easy Manner, he having said, as you have already heard, *Look unto me, and be you saved, all ye ends of the Earth*, for he who so saith is God, and there is none else, Isa. 45. 22. But to unhinge and take off our Minds from all such vain and imaginary Difficulties as these, and to put us forward in this more easy way, St. Paul saith, Rom. 10. 6. *Say not in thine Heart, who shall ascend into Heaven, to bring Christ down; or who descend into the Deep, to bring up Christ?* As if he had said, I am aware of your weak and carnal Reasonings, when we treat of believing in, coming to, or winning of Christ, that you take it up as a very strange and unaccountable Thing, seeing that he is in Heaven, and

you on Earth; but behold, I shew you a nearer and shorter Way, to come at this Person and Prize, for, saith he, *the Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth*, when thou dost speak, or talk of him; and in thy Heart, when thou dost think or meditate upon him, as he is revealed in the written Word, for the personal and eternal Word is always in, and attending of the Oral, or written Word; whence he concludes, in *ver. 9. That if thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in thine Heart that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved.* And to clear this Conclusion, he states it in the right order of Action, that is, that the Heart in believing must go before the Mouth in confessing of Christ; *for with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made to Salvation.* Step therefore quickly into this near and ready Way, look into the Word, where you may apprehend, and take hold of this great Prize, and as a grand Reason why we should search the Scriptures, himself hath said, that *they are they which testify of me,* John 5. 39. But,

II. Here is room or place for a word of Exhortation, seeing we are *so dull and slow of Heart* to such an important Affair, as is the winning of Christ, which does infinitely transcend all worldly Enjoyments; yet how few are there to be found, which are in good earnest in quest of so great a Prize? and did not God require it, and the Sons of Men greatly need it, there were no need of this Exhortation; but what is there more notoriously evident, than that the Children of Men are generally cold and heartless to that which is of the greatest Consequence; as therefore the Whip and Spur are to the Horse, so is Exhortation, and Argument unto Man; but whether
you

you will receive it kindly, or be freely mov'd by it, I know not, yet this I do know, that it must be used; therefore I shall address my self first to such as yet may not have won Christ, and then to them that have. I begin with the first of these:

1. You, who ever you are, who neither think upon, nor regard Christ, or the Winning of him, but have the frequent Flights of your Fancies, the Course of your Thoughts, and restless running of your wild Affections, only toward the Creatures, and some vain imaginary Happiness to be obtain'd, in the Acquisition and Injoyment of something or other of this kind, who let these ingross and take up the Thoughts of your Hearts, and ingage your utmost Contrivance, have the closest Application and Attention of your Minds. Oh! Remember that this is your great Folly, and that it is your Wisdom, Duty and Interest, to mind and make sure of Christ, as your own, giving no Sleep to your Eyes, nor Slumber to your Eye-Lids, till you have ground to conclude, that he is yours. Endeavour therefore to clip the Wings of your flying Fancies, and check your rambling Thoughts, yea, stop and stay your flowing Affections, that being thus restrain'd they run not, as in times past, after lying Vanities, and let your utmost Endeavours be for the winning of Christ, and for Motive and Argument consider, that the Prize is worthy, the Way is easy, the Time is short, and the Danger is great; if you win Christ you win all, but if you lose him, all is lost; in other things Necessity and Interest are the most prevailing Motives to Action and Endeavours, and how unaccountably stupid must they be, who are no ways moved by such Arguments; but if after all this, you choose rather to remember and regard Riches, Honours, Houses, Lands, or whatever else may be

be yours, and herewith forget and neglect, refuse and reject, and thus finally lose the Lord Jesus Christ, how inexcusable and intolerable will your Case be, when you shall look that Jesus in the Face, from whose Face the Heavens and the Earth shall flee away, and all Nations wail because of the dread of his Approach? if therefore you would escape his Frowns and Fury, yea, his utmost Indignation and Wrath, and have the Marks of his royal Favour, the Smiles of his Countenance, yea, the moving of his Bowels, and the Kisses of his Mouth, win him. It is remarkable, that as there is an acceptable Year of the Lord, so to it is annexed the Day of Vengeance of our God, *Isa. 61. 2.* And as ever you would escape the latter, be sure to prize and improve the former; nor can you do this better, than in the winning of Christ, *therefore kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the Way, when his Wrath is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their Trust in him, Psal. 2. 12.* Turn then the Eyes of your Minds towards him, set your Affections upon him, and let him have the most close and intent Application and Addresses of your Minds; nor would I leave you thus, without giving you some short, but suitable Direction: If then you would win Christ, with all that pertains unto him, wisely observe, and diligently improve all Times, Means and Occasions which tend thereunto; thus watch daily at his Gates; freely and frequently read and hear his Word, for to this the Promises of his Grace are annex'd, *Rev. 1. 3. Prov. 8. 34.* And when at any time the things of this World do fail us, or seem to frown upon us, or yield us nothing but the bitter Fruits of Vexation, Trouble and Grief, O then should we remember the Constancy of Christ, and those surpassing Comforts
that

that flow from him who hath assured us, that in the World we shall have Trouble, but in him we may have Peace ; then should we gather and eat his Fruits, who has said, *My Fruit is better than Gold, yea, than fine Gold, and my Revenue than choice Silver* : Thus when, as is the present Case, we lose a Friend, or Relation on Earth, this should put us in mind, and in quest of a better in Heaven ; such is our Lord Jesus : And many times the Lord doth improve such Occasions as these, to the Ends of commencing or renewing Acquaintance and Communion with himself. *Isa. 54. 6. The Lord hath called thee as a Woman forsaken and grieved in Spirit, and a Wife of Youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. Jacob found God in Bethel, when Esau was to him as a Son of Beliel. And how often has the Lord put Songs in their Mouths, who have been put in Prison for his Cause.*

2dly, They that win Christ not only may, but ought to wear him : And unto this there is oftentimes great Need of Exhortation ; If a Man or a Woman win any Thing of a wearable Kind, may they not, nay, do they not commonly wear it ; even so should those that win Christ. The Apostle saw that there was great Need to excite the *Romans* to this, as in the 13th Chapter, and 14th Verse, *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*, (mark) it is the Lord that is to be put on, and if so, we must put off our own Lordliness, and cease to live as we list, or as tho' we were accountable to none : But to put him on as we ought, is to make his Will our Rule, and his Law our Obligation, as it is written, *Psal. 45. 11. He is thy Lord, and worship thou him* : Nor is Darkness more contrary to Light, than the Life and Language of that Man who complements Christ with the Name and Title of Lord, when he is resolved to be his own. And this

this he proclaims by a dissolute and wicked Conversation, and therefore our Saviour in so sharp a Manner, does interrogate such, saying, *Why call ye me Lord, and do not the Things which I say unto you?* As if he had said, for shame, leave such Contradictions, either quit my Name, or keep your selves under the awful Authority of the same: For to yield and submit to his royal Pleasure, in whatsoever is of a practical Nature, is to put him on, and this is the undoubted Right of all that win him: And thus did the *Jaylor* and his House, having won Christ, they soon put him on, by being baptized, according to his special Command and holy Example, *Acts* 16. 33, 34. And thus also did the *Galatians* win and wear Christ, *Gal.* 3. 27. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ:* And so did the *Corinthians*, and *Samaritans*, *Acts* 8. 12. & 18. 8. And in wearing this our Winnings, Jesus is to be so put on, as to quit all Hopes in, and Conceits and Confidence of being saved by any other Way or Means whatsoever; for there is none other Name given under Heaven, whereby Men might be saved, but by the Name of Jesus Christ, neither is any Thing, nor every Thing, we may, or can do, in the least to be substituted, or put in the Room of Jesus Christ; for Jesus will be altogether, or not at all our Saviour, as may be easily and strongly argued from his next Title, and the other Part of the Christian-Garment, which is *Christ*, or the Anointed of God. But then,

Secondly, To them that may hope, at least, that they have won Christ; these I exhort to take and keep their Comforts, Pleasure, and Delights in him, in whom is to be found all that is adequate or suitable to such an End: For, when Persons have won any Thing of Worth and Excellence,

cellence, they do not only wear it, but take Pleasure and Delight therein, much more should they that win Christ do so. Men of worldly Minds will rejoice when they win or gain any Thing suitable to their Dispositions and Desires: Thus Soldiers will rejoice and triumph when they win Battles, take Towns and Spoils, or when they over-run, conquer, and subdue Countries and Kingdoms: And Merchants and Mariners will be glad, and rejoice, when they win or get great and rich Returns, after long and dangerous Voyages; but what is all this, that is, or might be mention'd of this kind, to the Winning of Christ? For, what Comparison is there between Carnal and Spiritual, Temporal and Eternal, Finite, and Infinite Good. No wonder then to hear *Mary* say as before, *My Soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*: And *Isaiah*, *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and my Soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation, and covered me with the Robes of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with her Jewels*, Isa. 61. 10. Habakkuk 3. 17, 18. Phil. 3. 3. *We are the Circumcision that worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no Confidence in the Flesh*: And indeed, in him are found all the Arguments and Reasons of spiritual Pleasure; and tho' we are allow'd to take Pleasure in some other Things, yet this is to have the Ascendant: And therefore *David* would make his Access to God, as to his chief Joy: For whatever may be taken as the several Wells of Salvation, out of which, with Joy, Water is to be drawn, yet Christ is the Fountain from whence all these Waters and Pleasures flow. And thus may we account for *St. Paul's* frequent and fervent urging

F

Christians

Christians to *rejoyce in the Lord, and again, I say rejoyce.* Here the Reason as to the Object is always the same, and still firm and stable, and the Exercise sometimes *unspeakable and full of Glory*, when it is under the Conduct and Influence of a lively Faith, and ardent Love, then, as with a discerning Eye, and an applying Hand, like *St. Paul*, such can say, *Who loved me, and gave himself for me*; or can read and appropriate to themselves his Draught and Description of the Saints Inventory, wherein it is said again, and again, *That all is yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the World, Life, or Death, Things present, or Things to come, All are yours.* And seeing this *All* is theirs, hence it is, that sometimes they are fill'd *with all Joy and Peace through believing*, Rom. 15. 13.

But here I must take peculiar Notice of them, whose Way to these Things may be cloudy and dark, as well as rough and deep, and consequently their Adventures therein (as they may think) dangerous; such I mean, who tho' they may have won Christ, yet have but little Hope, and less Comfort, who walk in Darkness, and have no Light, such should *trust in the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God.* And tho' the smoaking Flax can hardly be blown into a Flame, nor Judgment brought unto a victorious Issue, yet their Cause is recorded on High; and therefore in the mean time, let such of you consider the many goodly Signs there are with you, of Christ's having won you, and of your winning him: For, what less than this can be meant, by the frequent Working of your Hearts towards him, and the great Share he hath in your Thoughts, who, many times, by his Kindness, captivates and keeps the same with your greatest Delight and Approbation, being at the same time well assured, that none is more worthy and deserving

ving thereof, so that he hath the Ascendant, in your Esteem, and the frequent Visits of your fervent Desires, who with the *Psalmist* can say, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none on Earth, that I desire besides thee.* Since therefore your deepest and greatest Concern is about the winning of him, and your greatest Fear, that of missing of, or losing him, one might think it were no great or hard Matter to persuade such of their having won Christ; but yet many times so it is: Tho' they can joyn with *John* in this, *we love him*, yet are afraid of the Conclusion, *because he first loved us.* Oh to think that they should be the Beloved of the Lord, this is what they can hardly give into, when they consider how unlovely they look in their own Eyes, not minding, or not believing what he hath said, *I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me,* Prov. 8. 17. Or thinking that his Love is like their own, not being able to act, but on the Consideration and View of some alluring and attractive Excellency in the Object. But Beloved, this is a grand Mistake, for the Lord hath assured us, *That he loves freely,* Hos. 14. 4. Ezek. 16. 8. But if Christ hath won you, why should it be an incredible Thing that you have also won him, when the Signs of the former are as so many Seals to the latter? Cannot you say that he hath, in some Measure, the Bent of your Minds, and fervent Desires of your Souls? Is it not in your Hearts to suffer, yea, to adventure any Thing for him, and cleave and adhere unto him? Should you be enticed to turn your Backs upon him, or to return to *Egypt*, or *Moab*, would it not make your Hearts to ake, yea, become a Motive to take fresh and firmer Hold of, and to follow Christ, as *Ruth* did her Mother-in-Law; and if Satan raise a tempestuous Storm, by setting near Relations,

and whoever else he can, with all imaginable Fierceness and Fury against you ; if then you value so much the more the Friendship of Christ, and take Sanctuary under the Shadow of his Almighty Wings, which they that know his Name will do, I am truly persuaded, that you are of the Number of them that have won Christ, and therefore should take Pleasure and Delight in him.

3dly, Seeing Christ is so great and valuable a Prize, and to be won in the Manner as hath been shewn, then permit and allow me to make my Application and Address to you, in the sweet and pleasant Way of Invitation and Entreaty, which ordinarily is most taking and moving with the Sons of Men. And Oh that my Ability was adequate to my Wish and Desire ; then would I so speak, that Multitudes might believe : But I know that the Success of all, in this Case, is in other, higher, and better Hands, which sometimes make use of but mean and unpolished Instruments. Therefore now if you have any Regard to the becoming truly happy, suffer your selves to be persuaded to make your Adventures for, and Advances towards the winning of Christ, assuring your selves that the doing of this will be the noblest Performance that can be brought into the Account of your Lives. This is the Crown and Glory of Christianity, which, as ever you would truly attain, hearken to no Discouragement, nor be afraid of any Amazement ; for tho' your Sins were for Number as the Sands, and for Colour as the deepest Crimson or scarlet Dye, yet notwithstanding all this, may you win Christ, (if but truly willing) and with him the compleat Absolution of all manner of Sins : What therefore I would in particular persuade you to, is, speedily, presently, and heartily to accept of an offer'd Jesus, who

is now at your Doors ; nor doth he stand idle there, but by many repeated Knocks, gives Intelligence of his great Condescension towards you, his vast Concern and Compassions for your Souls. Hear therefore his own Declaration to this Purpose, *Rev. 3. 20. Behold, I stand at the Door and knock, if any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.* Therefore open the Doors of your Hearts, that he may come in, who brings along with him all desirable Entertainments ; and if you are but willing, be assur'd he is much more so, there being no Reason to doubt hereof, when you consider, it is he that *worketh in you both to will and to do, of his own good Pleasure.* If then by his Power there be wrought in you such a Mind and Will, such a Bent and Inclination, as to admit and accept of Christ, as your Sovereign and Saviour, in him you will find the greatest Reasons for such a Choice ; and if, to such an End, you have any Respect to the Goodness of Nature, behold it is in its Perfection in him ; or if you have any Regard to Beauty, behold he *is white and ruddy, and the Chiefest among ten Thousands, and fairer than the Children of Men ; nay, he is the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person,* Cant. 5. 10. Psal. 45. 2. Heb. 13. Or if Wisdom and Knowledge may be any Motive, behold, *all the Treasures* of this kind are with him, Col. 2. 3. Or if Riches and Honours may be any Inducement to you, know ye, that this also is with him, and that of the best Kind, and longest Continuance : Therefore hath he said, *Prov. 8. 18. Riches and Honours are with me, yea, durable Riches and Righteousness, and that his Fruit is better than Gold, and his Revenue than choice Silver :* Or if you have any Regard to Strength, Power, and Authority, why, these also
are

are with him, *Matt.* 28. 18. *Rev.* 5. 12, 13. All which being duly consider'd, can you find any Room or Reason to object against him, or your accepting and embracing of him? But if any should yet think, that this is too great and good for them, consider, that if he don't think so, neither should you, and that he does not so think, what can be more evident than this is, by all the amazing Steps of his matchless Condescension, but at present you need not look or go any farther than to your own Doors, where it is (as you have already heard) that he is waiting on you to this very End: And shall he thus and there wait upon and court you, and you not consent and yield: Far, far be it from you, that you should ever any longer be so imprudent and unwise, as to add to all your other Sins, this most intolerable one, of refusing and rejecting an offer'd and offering Jesus; for 'tis he you see that thus offers himself: It remains then, that you consider, there is nothing so great lying in the way, to hinder your having of Christ, as your Sin and Folly in refusing of him. Behold therefore, and consider, that as there is no greater Duty incumbent upon you, nor Good to be attained and enjoyed by you, than is the winning and having of Christ; and that now he is near, even at the Door, yet know, that if you continue to neglect, he will not always continue to wait; for the acceptable Year of the Lord, and the Day of his Grace will be over, *Seek the Lord then while he may be found*, embrace the present Season, lest losing your Opportunity, you therewith also lose Christ, your selves, and all together.

But here it is likely, that some may be ready to say, that now I have touch'd them to the Quick, you I mean, who, it may be, frequently think, and dreadfully fear, that the Day of Grace is over,
and

and the Door of Hope shut against you ; when you consider the many Calls you have slighted, the Convictions you have stifled, and the many Promises, Vows, and Resolutions you have broken, the Remembrance of which is most grievous, and fills the Soul with unexpressible Bitterness, bearing it down with a Burthen intolerable ; and no wonder it is so, while you think your selves in that *Gall of Bitterness*, that can admit of no Sweet ; and bound with that Bond of Iniquity, that is not to be broken. Thus the Soul instead of quenching and extinguishing these Sparks of Hell, adds Fuel to the Flame, and thereby feeds and nourishes its own Tormentors ; for such are Fear and Despair. But (if you can) stay your selves a little, and consider, that as before you may have been too slow and dilatory, so now, it may be, you are too quick and rash ; for as we are naturally apt, and prone to go from one Extream to another, so, no doubt, is Satan very forward to observe our Temper, and improve every Occasion to this End : But if, as you think, the Day of Grace is over, I desire to know, how you came by this Day, or this Opportunity and Season of Grace, nay, by this Light and Conviction, this Fear and Care, yea, this Sense and Sorrow, all which bear Witness, that the Day of Grace is not over, but lengthened out unto you : While therefore Christ is knocking, as now, at your Doors, the Day of Grace is not over ; while the Sense of your Duty and Danger is quick upon you, as is evident by your Complaints, the Day of Grace is not over ; that which closed and shut up the Day of Grace with the *Jews*, was the Things that belong'd to their Peace being hid from their Eyes. And can you find the *Jews* complaining, as you do, that the Day of Grace is over ? No, surely, their Eyes are closed, that

that they do not see, and their Mouths are stoppt; that they cannot speak, as you do in this Case; this Season, and the Sense of it generally cease together: While therefore you are desirous and solicitous for Christ and Grace, that Day is not over with you, nor any that are thus coming unto him, and whoever do come, *he will in no wise cast them out*; and if so, then not for what you complain of. Have you slighted and refused Christ and Grace? Yet after all this, if you come to him, he will not for these Sights and Refusals that you have been guilty of towards him, slight and refuse you; no, no; saith he, *in no wise*, for no Cause, or by no Means, from which, may we not draw this Conclusion? That by no Means should you keep your selves from Christ, and especially by such weak and groundless Conclusions as yours are, as that the Day of Grace is over, and the Door of Hope shut: But to draw towards a Conclusion, I shall,

4^{thly}, Apply it by way of Comfort, and that particularly,

First, To such as have won Christ, you, who ever you are who have thus done, for your Comfort consider, that as the Prize you have won is the greatest, so your Interest therein is the surest; as the former is inestimable, so the latter is unalterable; for as the Prize you have won is most precious, so your Propriety is not precarious, Christ being once yours, will for ever remain so, never, never to be lost; tho' it is true that the Evidences thereof may be sometimes so sullied or defac'd that, you may not be well able to read your Securities, yet even then, God hath a Counter-part or Copy of all the Deeds and Grants, of Titles and Interest, made at any time to his People, and holds himself obliged to make them good, and therefore
when

when Christians cannot remember, or read their old Evidences, they should apply to God for more, giving up the former; but here behold how much better it is to win Christ, than this World, all which is of a loseable Nature, precarious and uncertain to the Winners of it. The *Chaldeans* won the first Monarchy of the World, yet they lost it by the *Persians*, nor could they, having won it, keep it from the *Grecians*, nor they again from the *Romans*, nor will these be able to keep it from the Christians, when once God's Time is come for the taking it away; I mention these Things, because they are the greatest Winnings that Men can make as to the Things of this World, and by this may we see how fickle and uncertain are the hold and enjoyment of these Things, to the Winners thereof, and how endless were it to take notice of all other and lesser Things of this kind; the rich Man mentioned by our Lord, who in the view of his Abundance, said to his Soul, *take thine Ease, eat, drink and be merry, for thou hast much Goods laid up for many Years*; To him God said, *thou Fool, this Night thy Soul shall be required of thee*, then whose shall all those Things be, which thou hast provided; but neither in Life nor Death, when God takes away the Soul, will he take away Christ from them that win him; and if Christ were to be lost as soon as won, what Encouragement were it to win him, or Comfort to them that have so done? But the contrary to this, is what I shall endeavour to demonstrate, and that by several Arguments. As,

First, If the Gifts and Callings of God be without Repentance or Change, and the winning of Christ is of that kind; then they that win Christ shall not lose him; but the one is certainly true, therefore the other, *Rom. 11. 29.* is an express Proof of the

G

former,

former, and to deny the latter, is to say that neither Christ, nor the Winning of him, are the Gift of God, which is directly contrary to the Scriptures, which declare, that *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting Life*, John 3. 16. And is not Faith, by which Christ is won, the Gift of God also; *Eph. 2. 8. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all Things?* And is not Faith, and every thing else, whereby Christ may be said to be won, and a sure Interest in him obtain'd, of the number of *all Things*, which are necessary? Which if they are, then are they God's Gifts, and such as he never repents the giving, nor will take away, or suffer to be lost. And thus I think my first Argument stands good, that such as win Christ shall never lose him. But then,

2dly, If Christ will never lose such, then they shall never lose him, both which are equally true, *John 6. 39. And this is the Father's Will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last Day; and in Chap. 10. 27, 28, 29. My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand: My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand; therefore as the Will and Power, both of the Father and the Son, are engaged to keep, preserve and save all such, it cannot be that these should be lost; but if any should object, that these may, notwithstanding, lose God and Christ; I answer, if this were true, it must be either in point of Favour or Fruition, but neither of these are true, and I concern not my self with any other Sense, wherein the Terms of the Objection, may be pretended to*

to be understood ; now, that those who win Christ shall never lose the Favour and Fruition, neither of the Father, nor the Son, (that is, totally and for ever) is a Truth abundantly attested in the sacred Scriptures, *John 13. 1. Having loved his own, he loved them to the End, Jer. 31. 3. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting Love, and therefore with Loving-kindness have I drawn thee, Psal. 89. 30, 31, 32, 33. If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments, if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I visit their Transgressions with a Rod, and their Iniquities with Stripes, nevertheless my Loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail ; my Covenant will I not break, nor alter the Thing that is gone out of my Mouth, Isa. 54. 10. For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath Mercy on thee.* Though he may hide his Face, and appear sometimes as angry, and strike close and hard with his Rod, yet all this is consistent with his constant and unchangeable Loving-kindness, so that this is not to be lost ; but it is likewise evident that the Fruition of God and Christ shall not be lost, and that neither as to the State of Grace here, nor of Glory hereafter, if he will never turn away from these to do them good, then they shall never lose him, but he will never so turn away, as appears from *Jer. 32. 40.* And not only so, but he also holds himself deeply engaged to perform what he hath said, to wit, that *he will put his Fear in their Hearts, that they shall not depart from him.* Thus you see that God will not, and they shall not turn away, and how then can these be lost ? Which they must be if they lose Christ, and hath not he promised to be with his *always to the end of the World,*

Mat. 28. 20. And how can they lose him, who will be always with them, nay, seeing it is in these that Christ doth live, dwell and reign, how can they lose him? But to these Things the Scriptures do plainly and abundantly witness; besides, if either Christ could lose, or be lost by the true Christian, it must be, I presume, either by their own Folly, or the Fraud and Violence of their Enemies, but these Things cannot agree with the Scriptures, which have, nor with many others that might be mention'd, if these Things were to be admitted, it must be granted that the Gates of Hell do prevail, contrary to the great Promise of our all-sufficient Saviour, who hath absolutely and peremptorily said, *Father, I will that those which thou hast given me, may be with me, to behold my Glory*; and by his Apostle St. Paul, hath assured us, that these shall be *ever with the Lord*. It therefore follows then, that they which win Christ never will, nay never shall lose him,

3dly, If they that win Christ, may lose him again, then may Christ lose the *Travel of his Soul*, the Purchase of his Blood, the Members of his Body, and his own mystical Perfection, but the latter is false, and therefore so is the former; if that which tends to make Preaching vain, Believing vain, and to bring all Men again under Sin and Condemnation, is by no means to be admitted, then consequently the losing of Christ is not to be admitted; 1 Cor. 15. 14. *If Christ be not risen, says the Apostle, then is our Preaching vain, and your Faith vain*. Now though this Consequence were true, if Christ was not risen, yet by the Falsity of the latter, he proves that of the former, and the Case is the same to them that believe; as to the losing of Christ, whether in the Grave, or out of the same, they were as good lose him there as any where else, but this
you

you see is not to be admitted, without a dreadful train of Consequences ; for admitting the former, there is no avoiding the latter.

4thly, If the Person, Capacity and Covenant of the second *Adam*, and the State of them that are in and under him, be unspeakably better, and more sure than the first, then consequently Christ cannot lose his People nor be lost by them ; and it is needless to prove that Christ is better than *Adam*, or that his Person, Capacity and Covenant are likewise so, for to deny this, is to detract from the Honour of our great Redeemer, and extremely weaken the Hope and Comfort of Believers ; But though I could agreeably to my self enlarge on this Subject, yet I must forbear, and leave it with what I have said for the good Hope, and strong Consolation of them that win Christ, while they consider that these their great Winnings don't lye so precarious and uncertain, as all the good Things of this World do, nor as our State and Standing in *Adam* did, but that the Happiness of those that win Christ, is built, and stands upon unshaken and everlasting Foundations ; when therefore the great God will shake the Heavens and the Earth, and make them melt and depart, even then these are the Things which shall remain, and that cannot be shaken, even the Covenant of Grace, the Kingdom of Christ, and the Subjects and Blessings thereof, *Heb.* 12. 27. (But finally, in a Word or two to the Relations of our deceased Friend, who I hope will bear with me, while I tell you the good Hope I have of her happy End, and of her winning of Christ, in her way thereunto. And that,

First, Because what ever Enticements she might have to the contrary, yet with a brave and exemplary Resolution, would be found in the way
of

of the Promise, watching daily at Wisdom's Gates, and waiting at the Posts of her Doors, which is the way to find her, and to obtain Life and Favour of the Lord.

But more particularly, as I had two Opportunities of conversing with her a little before she dy'd, in both of them I found it to be the Bent of her Mind, and the great Concern of her Life, that she might win Christ, and be found in him; and tho' through her Being then very weak and languishing, she spake but faintly of other Things, yet on the speaking of Christ, she would appear even to put on Strength, as though the Thoughts and Speech of him were a reviving Cordial to her; and when I gave but a Hint of Hope, touching her Return to live yet a little longer, she seem'd to reject it with Contempt, in comparison of Christ, saying, *That Life nor all the World were nothing to an Interest in Christ*: If then she did thus esteem and value him, thus prize and prefer him, and honour him with an intent Application of Mind, imploring his Grace and Mercy, and to be remembred by him with the Favour that he beareth to his People: Why may we not hope that she won Christ, as, you have heard, the Woman of *Canaan* did? And on this Foot I would move and persuade you to moderate your Grief, to assuage and govern your Sorrows: Tho' I know that Nature is very apt to move and work on such Occasions, and to take her Flights, if not more intolerably confin'd within, and appearing so afloat in Floods of Tears, almost ready to overwhelm her self therein; for the Sorrow of the World sometimes worketh Death: For good old *Eli* hearing that *Israel* was beaten, and that the Ark of God was taken, and of his Son's being slain, he instantly fell down and dy'd therewith; and *Ra-*
chel

chel refused the Comforts of Life, because her Children *were not*, being, as it were, weary of her Life, because theirs was gone; and David was far gone this way, when he said, *Oh Absalom my Son, my Son, would I had dy'd for thee.* And oftentimes the Sorrows of surviving Relations, for their departed ones, is inhauc'd with the Remembrance of some agreeable Things, (as they apprehend) as appears from their Conduct and Behaviour: And will you indulge and nourish an immoderate Sorrow for your departed Relation, when you have such Hope that she is gone to better Company than yours, to a better Place than you are in, to better Riches than yours are? What, shall Tears continually trickle or flow from your Eyes, because all are wiped away from hers? What, can't you sleep, because she sleeps, nor rest, because she is at Rest? Can you find no Peace, because she is at Peace? Are your Bosoms void of all Comfort, because she is now lodg'd in Abraham's. Now therefore abate, restrain, and moderate your Sorrow, unless you would proclaim to the World that you did not love her; Christ said to his Disciples, *If you loved me ye would rejoyce, because I said, I go to the Father;* not but that they loved Christ. But their Sorrow was not now under the Conduct and Government of Reason, Passion had got the Ascendant; and when that becomes so, 'tis no wonder to hear of Sampson's losing his Hair and Strength together: Now Reason and Revelation tell the Disciples, that it was for Christ's Good, and theirs, that he went away, and in that they should rejoyce; so now, tho' a Daughter, a Sister, a Wife, a Mother, a Neighbour, or a Friend be gone, yet take heed that her Gain be not your Grief. But if your Affliction bring her frequently to Mind, and I confess it may be hard for you to forget her:

The Christian's Prize.

be sure to mind this of her, that she recommends to you the winning of Christ, as the grand and important Concern of your Lives, and in this Matter hath made me this Day, as it were, her Spokes-Man to you; so that tho' she is dead, yet speaketh to you: Think then, when you think of her, that you hear her say to you, *win, win Christ*; which if you do, then may you find, that God, who is wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in Working, can bring Good out of Evil, Light out of Darkness, and Life out of Death: If then after so bright an Example, as is now set before you, you are found in the Remains of your Lives to carry a mighty Care and Concern for the winning of Christ, taking those Steps, and standing upon those Grounds, whereon you may enter your Claims of Propriety, and Interest in him as your own, then will you be prepar'd for the Approach of the King of Terrors, and to go after your departed Friend: this will turn your Grief into Gladness, and your Sorrows into Joys; yea, this is what will make you truly blessed both in Life and Death.

F I N I S.